THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND——

THE sympathy of our readers will be extended towards the only daughter of Bret Harte, who, having been left unprovided for, is now much in need of help. She was trained as an elocutionist, but through ill-health is unable to follow her profession. A fund has been started to relieve her straitened circumstances, and subscriptions will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Dr. C. L. Alexander, Holly Lodge, Upper Parkfields, Putney, S.W. Her father, as is well known, was a great admirer of Dickens and his works, and his poem, *Dickens in Camp*, which we print on another page, is considered one among, if not the very finest of the numberless poems which the novelist's fame has inspired.

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The announcement that a complete collection of the poems of Adelaide Anne Procter is to be issued by Messrs. Bell & Sons will interest Dickensians. Many of her legends and lyrics appeared in *Household Words*, and when they were issued in a volume Dickens wrote a very sympathetic introduction to it. This introduction will of course appear in the new volume. Miss Procter's father was "Barry Cornwall," a great friend of Dickens. But it was not on account of that friendship that her poems first saw the light in *Household Words*, for they were sent to the editor over the assumed name of "Mary Berwick." "If I send him in my own name verses he does not honestly like," she said, "either it will be very painful to him to return them, or he will print them for papa's sake and not for their own."

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His Majesty's Theatre opened its present season on 4 September with Mr. Comyns Carr's dramatic version of *Oliver Twist*, which we dealt with on the occasion of its first production on the last night of Mr. Tree's season in July. Some alterations in the cast have been made. Miss Nellie Bowman now takes the part of Oliver, Miss Alma Murray that of Mrs. Maylie, Miss Jennie Lee, whose fame as "Jo" is world-wide, is Mrs. Bedwin, and Mr. Frank Stanmore the Artful Dodger. The three chief characters of Fagin, Bill Sikes, and Nancy are sustained by Mr. Tree, Mr. Lyn Harding, and Miss Constance Collier, as remarkable a trio of power in impersonation as has appeared in any one play of its kind for years. No lover of Dickens should lose the opportunity of witnessing the realistic representations of these three great creations of the master's pen. By the courtesy of Mr. Tree we are able to reproduce in the present issue two of Mr. C. A. Buchel's clever posters, one representing the scene on the steps of London Bridge and the other the chief characters of the play.

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A handsome tablet to the memory of Charles Dickens has just been fixed to the outer wall of Bleak House, formerly Fort House, Broadstairs, where the great novelist lived for many years. The tablet, which is of granite, has in the centre a fine bronze bust of Dickens surrounded by a wreath of laurels, on which are inscribed in gilt letters the titles of some of his most famous works: "Pickwick," "David Copperfield," "Oliver Twist," "Dombey and Son," "Little Dorrit," and "Bleak House." It is unfortunate that the name Bleak House should have been bestowed upon this house, because it is in no way connected with the novel bearing that name. The original house of the book is near St. Albans, besides which not a line of *Bleak House* was written there. The idea, however, of memorializing the house in which Dickens lived and wrote is a good one.

* * *

In Mr. Percy Fitzgerald's new book on Dickens, a review of which appears on another page, there is an interesting reference to Edwin Drood's watch, which comes very apropos just now, when so much attention is being given to the mystery. Mr. Fitzgerald had been concerned, professionally, some three or four years before in a murder case. "It had been first tried without issue," he says; "on the second trial the man was convicted and hanged. The chief evidence was the silent one of a watch found in the River Lagan, near Belfast, and which was an inducement to the crime. This dramatic case made a deep impression on me, and I wrote a highly coloured account for Dickens's journal, where it appeared under the title of *The Fatal Watch*. Dickens was much struck with it. When he came to deal with the murder in his story, this element of the watch may have suggested itself as a new and telling incident."

* * *

At the historic pump-room at Bath on Saturday, 9 September, a bust of Charles Dickens, the gift and work of Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, his friend and pupil, was unveiled. The pedestal is decorated with three of the Bath scenes from *Pickwick*—the leg of mutton "swarry," the sedan-chair adventure, and the card party at the Assembly Rooms.

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The third annual meeting of the Dickens Fellowship will take place at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, London, on 11 October, at 7.30, when the report and balance-sheet will be presented, and some proposed alterations in the rules. All members should have received a copy of the report by this time, and should any one have been overlooked, communication should be made to the Hon. Secretary.

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Owing to the discontinuance of *Household Words*, the Dickens Fellowship has made arrangements with the proprietors of *Great Thoughts* for that paper to become the weekly organ of the society, and all notices and other official matter will appear therein from week to week.

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The cover design of the present number is a reproduction of that of *A Tale of Two Cities*, drawn for the cover of the original issue in monthly parts.

THE EDITOR.

DICKENS'S INSTINCT FOR REFORM

By W. WALTER CROTCH, F.S.S.

II

AT one time Dickens urges that our primary duty is to help in the uplifting of "the community at large"; at another is bespeaking "your enlightened care for the happiness of the many"; at another quoting favourite strophes from Tennyson's *Palace of Art* and *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, in which the same lesson is taught. Always the message is the same, the inalienable right of all men to equality of opportunity for social service and self-development. It cannot be said, either, that this view of his democratic leanings is weakened by that confession of political faith which he made at a great gathering in Birmingham in 1869: "I will now discharge my conscience of my political creed, which is contained in two articles, and has no reference to any party or persons. My faith in the people governing is, on the whole, infinitesimal; my faith in the people governed is, on the whole, illimitable." Mr. Gissing, it is true, used to affect that this phrase, which had bewildered many newspapers, was a further proof that Dickens "was never a democrat; in his heart of hearts he always held that to be governed was the people's good." This seems to be a strangely inconsequent finding, for Dickens himself pointed out a few months later the charge of ambiguity was not justified, and that he certainly on that occasion used expressions which prove the precise antithesis of Mr. Gissing's contention. His faith in those who were governing the people was small; his faith in the great mass of the people who were governed was boundless. The declaration was not that it was "good to be governed" in the narrow sense in which the word is used, but that he had the profoundest belief that in spite of the yoke of class government, the people—the great mass of toiling, sinning, erring people—would yet work out their own salvation. This is no mere sympathetic interpretation of Dickens's words, for in order to make his meaning quite clear and free from all other dispute, he uses Buckle's words: "They may talk as they will about reforms which Government has introduced, and improvements to be expected from legislation, but whoever will take a wider and more commanding view of human affairs will soon discover that such hopes are chimerical. They will learn that lawgivers are nearly always the obstructors of society instead of its helpers, and that in the extremely few cases where their measures have turned out well their success has been owing to the fact that, contrary to their usual custom, they have implicitly obeyed the spirit of their time, and have been—as they always should be—the mere servants of the people, to whose wishes they are bound to give a public and legal sanction." Dickens approved these words specifically.[1] He believed not as Mr. Gissing would have us think he did, that "the vast majority of men are unfit to form sound views on what is best for them," and that "though the voice of the people must be heard, it cannot always be allowed to rule," but that the people should be represented by themselves; that Parliament should give expression to the views of the many, should

[1] Birmingham, January 6th, 1870.

exist to redress their grievances, promote their well-being and happiness, and make laws for their greater prosperity.

And here Dickens disagreed with Ruskin, as many of us think rightly so, for whereas the latter believed that social progress would come through an hereditary aristocracy, the other, out of a large observation and actual experience of the poor, believed that the patronage which it would inflict would cripple and enslave, and that the only hope of social conditions being made healthy rested with the people themselves.

He was quite ready to jeer with Carlyle, at Parliament, as an idle talking-shop. Take, for instance, that satiric speech on Administrative Reform, delivered in 1885. Talking of the House of Commons he said, "I will not ask how it happens that bills which cramp and worry people, and restrict their scant enjoyments, are so easily passed, and how it happens that measures for their real interest are so very difficult to be got through Parliament. I will not analyse the confined air of the lobbies, or reduce to their primitive gases its deadening influences on the memory of that honourable member who was once a candidate for your and my 'independent vote and interest.' I will not ask what is that secretarian figure, full of blandishments, standing on the threshold with its finger on its lips. I will not ask how it comes that those personal altercations, involving all the removes and definitions of Shakespeare's Touchstone—the retort courteous, the quip modest, the reply churlish, the reproof valiant, the countercheck quarrelsome, the lie circumstantial, and the lie direct—are of immeasurably greater interest in the House of Commons than the health, the taxation, and the education of a whole people. I will not penetrate into the mysteries of that secret chamber, in which the Bluebeard of Party keeps his strangled public questions, and with regard to which, when he gives the key to his wife, the new-comer, he strictly charges her on no account to open the door. I will merely put it to the experience of everybody here whether the House of Commons is not occasionally a little hard of hearing, a little dim of sight, a little slow of understanding, and whether, in short, it is not in a sufficiently invalided state to require close watching, and the occasional application of sharp stimulants; and whether it is not capable of considerable improvement. I believe that in order to preserve it in a state of real usefulness and independence the people must be very watchful and very jealous of it." In that was best expressed his attitude towards Parliament; so long as it was unrepresentative of the people, so long did he distrust it, so long did he prescribe that it should have "its memory jogged and be kept awake" as to the reforms waiting attention at its hands. He held steadfastly, nevertheless, that Parliament did exist to obey the mandates of the people, and should be made to do it. "I hold that no power can deprive us of our rights as electors," he declared. He took the democratic view that Parliament existed for the people, that the people made it, and that its functions were to do the serious legislative business desired by the nation, and have done with "drowsy twaddle, unmeaning routine, and worn-out conventionalities." Here, in spite of what the critics may say, Dickens was an ardent democrat, and it is equally obvious that his interest in "poor and hard-driven sons of men" was much greater than that evoked by pity only; it was too deep-rooted for

that, it had its foundations in his unswerving democratic impulse, and in his intuitive judgment that it was the divine right of the majority of citizens to rule.

The only ground the critics have for their contempt of Dickens's middle-class leanings is that he was largely a mediator in our social life. Whilst he was the unflinching champion of the poor, whilst he exposed evils with an undaunted courage and suffered continually abuse for his pains, he yet believed that progress would be won more by general consensus of faith and desire than by class uprising; he advocated nothing merely for the sake of gratifying the restless pruriency of innovation. For this reason, his stories seem to bear the design of reconciling the upper and the middle classes (more especially the latter) to the inevitability of change and reform. He taught them that social change did not mean national disaster; that they could have complete faith and assurance in the sturdy common sense of the British people. He stood for steady and prudent advance, not only because he believed that in progress and in improvement in the conditions of the poor lay the real safety and security of other classes. The danger which existed in the neglect of public evils he recognized always; and in *A Tale of Two Cities* he constantly insists that the Revolution was evoked not because the principles of human brotherhood and industrial emancipation were waiting to be applied to a bold and ill-fated social experiment, but because oppression had stalked abroad, corruption had eaten out the hearts of nobles and of kings, and indifference—stolid, immovable indifference to the needs of the poor—prevailed in the national life. For him this great internecine struggle possessed no tinselled splendours. Just as the insular rationalism of Tennyson had caused him to jeer at "the red fool fury of the Seine," so Dickens, whilst exciting our sympathy for the revolutionists, realized but imperfectly all the Revolution has meant for us, and the sheer gain which has come to England, for example, as a result of that singularly tragic, swift, and audacious act in which the people of France engaged. He did not see that certain ideas of liberty were forged in the memorable heat of that bloody time, which we, as a nation, have since approved; all he did see clearly was that France's mistake must be avoided; that by patient and gradual reform we should obviate extreme or raw haste and excesses in political discontent. In so far as this is a fault it is so only because it is the excess of a great virtue. He was fearful lest the waves of democracy, through dashing too high and relentlessly upon the bulwarks of privilege, should recede the further for the effort. He believed that by the steadier flow would the ground be permanently gained. But he had faith in the final issue all the same. "In my sphere of action I have tried to understand the heavy social grievances of our time and to help to set them right." That was no idle boast, but the one outstanding feature of his work was that in all his declarations of human equality he went to the very roots of social reform, and impressed the divine stamp upon the uttermost claims of democracy. "I have found even in evil things that soul of goodness which the Creator has put in them. Throughout my life I have been anxious to show that virtue may be found in the bye-ways of the world, that it is not incompatible with

poverty and even with rags, and to keep steadily through life the motto expressed in the burning words of your Northern poet:—

'The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.'"

Therein was he true to the great reforming band of his time. Whitman had told us "that amid the measureless grossness and the slag, enclosed and safe within its central heart nestles the seed-perfection"; Tennyson had declared that he had found ploughmen and shepherds veritable "sons of God and kings of men in utter nobleness of mind"; Carlyle was uttering his fierce diatribes against mistaken nobility; Ruskin was preaching a new doctrine of brotherhood in service; Browning was writing poetry which "shows a heart blood-tinctured of a veined humanity." Mrs. Browning was plucking up "social fictions bloody rooted," and declaring that "first and last are equal, saint and corpse and little child." And so one might proceed. Democracy was being deified in literature and art. The long-neglected were invited to claim their inheritance. The nobility of humble men was being taught, and Dickens came to the teaching with an enthusiastic regard for its truth. He endeavoured by the might of his energies, as Professor Wilson (Christopher North) well said, to transmute what was base into what is as precious as beaten gold. "I believe," said Dickens, "that Virtue shows quite as well in rags and patches as she does in purple and fine linen. I believe that she and every beautiful object in external nature claims some sympathy in the breast of the poorest man who breaks his scanty loaf of daily bread. I believe that she goes barefooted as well as shod. I believe that she dwells rather oftener in alleys and bye-ways than she does in courts and palaces." Here again his words ring true, when tested at the heart of social reform, for it is no question of present fitness which determines ultimately social and political changes; fitness is only found in the exercise of disputed privileges; it is faith that in all humanity there is the same nature from which the realized fitness of the privileged class has been evoked, as the prophecy that the same opportunity will produce the same fitness in all.

So that whilst Dickens was not the exponent of any particular theory of general constructive reform; whilst his teaching was limited to emphasizing the necessity for better sanitation and housing and education and denouncing the evils of landlordism, the poor law, the prison system, gambling, usury, war, slavery, child-labour, sweating, and other particular social defects, he yet became the prose prophet of the cause of social reform itself, and the firm upholder of that which alone is the assurance of its ultimate success, namely, our equality in the primary and fundamental instincts of faith and love and duty. Only from such an equality can just political and social institutions rise and take shape.

THE NATIONAL DICKENS LIBRARY

SUBSCRIPTIONS received to date towards establishing the above are as follows: Sidney Marriott, 21s.; H. Snowden Ward, 21s.; Dr. A. Barwick (U.S.A.), 4s.; Walter Dexter, 21s.; A. Schomberg, 5s.; and M. H. Spielmann, 21s.; in addition to many promises.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

X

DICKENS IN CAMP

ABOVE the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below;
The dim Sierras, far beyond, uplifting
Their minarets of snow.

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humour, painted
The ruddy tints of health
On haggard face and form that drooped and fainted
In the fierce race for wealth.

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew,
And cards were dropped from hands of listless leisure
To hear the tale anew;

And then, while round them shadows gathered faster,
And as the firelight fell,
He read aloud the book wherein the Master
Had writ of "Little Nell."

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy,--for the reader
Was youngest of them all,—
But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar
A silence seemed to fall;

The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,
Listened in every spray,
While the whole camp with "Nell" on English meadows
Wandered, and lost their way.

And so in mountain solitudes—o'ertaken
As by some spell divine—
Their cares drop from them like the needles shaken
From out the gusty pine.

Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire;
And he who wrought that spell?—
Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,
Ye have one tale to tell!

Lost is that camp! but let its fragrant story
Blend with the breath that trills
With hop-vines' incense all the pensive glory
That fills the Kentish hills.

And on that grave where English oak and holly
And laurel wreaths entwine,
Deem it not a too presumptuous folly,—
This spray of Western pine!

July, 1870. BRET HARTE.

By kind permission of Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

WITH BILL SIKES TO CHERTSEY

By JOHN SAYCE PARR

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. G. HARPER

FROM Bethnal Green to Chertsey is not now, nor ever was within the memory of man, the ideal walking tour, or the ideal tour by any method of progression. But if you would follow in the footsteps of Dickens and those strangely assorted characters of his, Bill Sikes, the eminent crib-cracker and beau-ideal of burglars, and little Oliver Twist, you must, to be thorough, progress all the way from that East-end starting-point to what is still, happily, the rural townlet of Chertsey, in Surrey. Thus only shall you obtain the "atmosphere" of the thing. But the literary pilgrim need not follow the actual conditions of Sikes's journey too exactly. Like the more artful medieval pilgrims on their penitential journeys, he may *boil* his peas, instead of wearing them in hard and painful fashion in his shoon; or, less metaphorically, he may bus it; nor need he, in search of that literary atmosphere of which I have spoken, select a day of atmospheric conditions similar to those which obtained when Sikes and Oliver set out. If, on the other hand, you would reproduce those circumstances as closely as may be, you should select a day when the roads are thick with mud, when a fog broods in London and a mist in the country, and a time when the waters of the Thames Valley are out.

The feat of tracing the footsteps of the pair from the Bethnal Green Road, through Shoreditch, thence "down Sun Street and Crown Street, and crossing Finsbury Square" into Chiswell Street and Barbican, "thence into Long Lane, and so into Smithfield," should be no difficult one, despite the changes and chances in London street topography since sixty-nine years ago; and so much accomplished brings us "through Hosier Lane into Holborn."

A very different Holborn from that of to-day. In 1837, when *Oliver Twist* was written, Holborn Hill—the "'Obun 'Ill" of Cockneys—was a fearsome descent and ascent on the way to and from the City—heartbreaking for horses; you can gather something of what it was like by gazing over the balustrade of the Holborn Viaduct of this our time. Only you must please to select the middle of it, where you look down, down upon Farringdon Street, far below. Thus only shall you be by way of comprehending those ancient terrors of Holborn Hill, which were for ever abolished in 1867, when the Holborn Viaduct was opened, to make a level roadway spanning the valley of the Fleet River.

"Now, young un," said Sikes, looking up at the clock of St. Andrew's Church, "hard upon seven! You must step out."

The clock of St. Andrew's, Holborn, is a good deal nearer the eye now than it was then, for the roadway of the Viaduct brings wayfarers some thirty feet above the old ground-level at this point, and you look down upon the churchyard as from an eyrie.

From here Dickens takes us in an abrupt transition to Hyde Park Corner. We are not told which way the burglar and the boy walked; whether they went down to Chancery Lane, or whether they held on down High Holborn and Oxford Street to Park Lane. They are

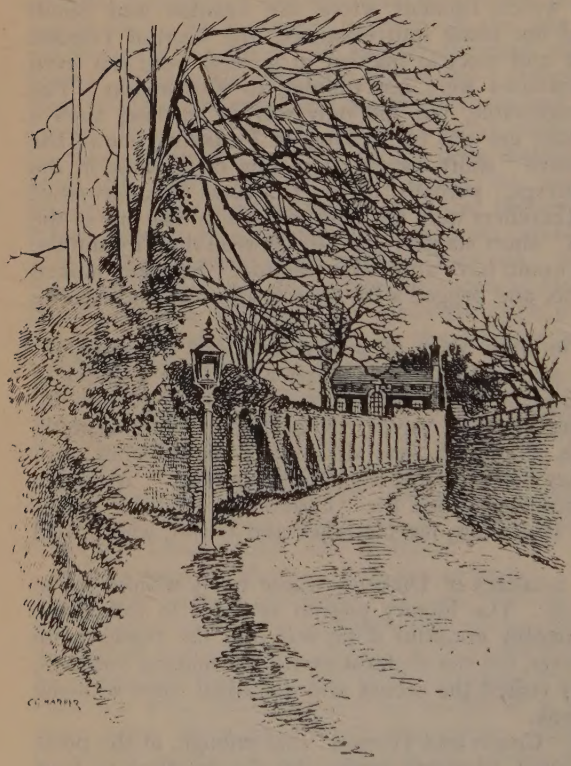
dumped down by the novelist at Hyde Park Corner, and made to walk some distance toward Kensington before they meet a man with an empty cart, with "Hounslow" painted on it, who gives them a lift. These incidents show how archaic are the methods of that age. Conceive the Bill Sikes of to-day *tramping* from Bethnal Green to Chertsey to crack a crib! He would almost certainly take a train from Waterloo; he might go part of the way by the "Tuppenny Tube"; if he were particularly stupid he might do part of the distance by bus. But at the time of which Dickens wrote the London and South Western Railway had not come into existence, the Central London Railway in particular and electric traction in general were not even dreamed of, and omnibuses were not running to Kensington. The thing is almost inconceivable, but the only way of reaching such a place as Chertsey at that era was by walking, or by taking one of the infrequent and expensive "short stages" from one of the inns in the City—the "Belle Sauvage," perhaps, or the Blossoms Inn, Lawrence Lane, or another. Travellers were few, and to have to take one of the lumbering two-horsed "short stages" that ran between the City and the small outlying towns would have attracted attention. So Sikes walked when he was obliged to, and begged a lift from chance carters when he could.

Imagine any one in these days of penny fares and a continuous stream of omnibuses asking for and obtaining a lift from a carter in Kensington! The thought makes one smile. But Sikes got his lift, and they went jogging on their way. "Kensington, Hammersmith, Chiswick, Kew Bridge, Brentford, were all passed; and yet they went on as steadily as if they had only just begun their journey." At length they came to a public-house called the "Coach and Horses." Here the cart proceeded to Hounslow, leaving Sikes and Oliver, whose road turned off to the left.

The topographical accuracy of Dickens, where he is wishful to be accurate, is astonishing. The literary pilgrim sets out to follow the route he indicates, possibly doubtful if he will find the places mentioned. There is, however, not the slightest excuse for making mistakes, for Dickens apparently visited the scenes and described them with the accuracy of a guide-book.

Thus, one finds the "Coach and Horses," sure enough, at the point where Brentford ends and Isleworth begins, by the entrance to Sion Park, and near the spot where the road branches off to the left. The "Coach and Horses" is not a picturesque inn. It is a huge four-square lump of a place, and wears, indeed, rather a dour and forbidding aspect. It is unquestionably the house of which Dickens speaks, and was built certainly not later than the dawn of the nineteenth century. In these latter days the road here has been rendered somewhat more urban by the advent of the electric tramway; but I have in my sketch of the scene taken the artistic licence of omitting that twentieth-century development, and, to add an air of verisimilitude, have represented Sikes and Oliver in the act of approaching. The left-hand road beyond leads to a right-hand road, as in the story, and this in due course to Hampton, although the "large gardens and gentlemen's houses on both sides of the way" are, after this lapse of time, somewhat to seek.

At Hampton, Sikes lingered over dinner at the "old public-house with a defaced signboard" until it was quite dark, and then secured another lift—this time as far as Lower Halliford. "As they passed Sunbury Church the clock struck seven. There was a light in the ferry-house window opposite, which streamed across the road, and threw into more sombre shadow a dark yew tree with graves beneath it. There was a dull sound of falling water not far off, and the leaves of the old tree stirred gently in the night wind. It seemed like quiet music for the repose of the dead."



PYRCROFT HOUSE
The house at Chertsey burgled by Bill Sikes

They walked through Shepperton in mud and darkness, through gloomy lanes and over cold open wastes, "and then came down to the river, where there stood a solitary house, ruinous and decayed." In this apparently uninhabited house the burglar's two comrades were awaiting him. Here Sikes and Oliver and the two others slept until half-past one in the morning, when Toby Crackit, Sikes's especial pal, woke the rest; and, preparing their housebreaking tools, the two criminals, each holding Oliver by a hand, started across Chertsey Bridge into the sleeping town.

They hurried through the main street of Chertsey and "cleared the town as the church bell struck two. Quickening their pace, they turned up a road upon the left hand. After walking about a quarter of a mile, they stopped before a detached house surrounded by a wall; to the top of which Toby Crackit, scarcely pausing to take breath, climbed in a twinkling."

This house has long been locally identified with the story. It is an early eighteenth-century mansion of red brick called Pyrcroft House, and stands in a lane at the end of Pyrcroft Street. For some years past, and until about 1894, it was the residence of Baron de Cosson.

The wall, as will be seen by the accompanying illustration, is a particularly high one, and the scaling of it "in a twinkling" does credit to Mr. Toby Crackit's agility.

To find this Dickens landmark, having turned into Pyrcroft Road, take neither the first turning to the left nor the one to the right, but keep ahead on the road past the "Carpenter's Arms"; and then, having passed that inn, take the left hand at a fork in the road. This immediately brings the traveller to an old-fashioned lane, bordered on the left by a tall, red-brick wall, supported at regular intervals by a long series of buttresses, which now appear to be themselves in need of buttressing. Over this decrepit wall can be glimpsed the upper part of the old mansion, which is situated in a singularly lonely and burglary-provoking situation.

"OLIVER TWIST" AT HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE

THE SCENE AT LONDON BRIDGE

THE CHIEF CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

MR. FITZGERALD'S NEW BOOK*

WHATEVER may be the verdict of the outside world, Mr. Percy FitzGerald's new book is certain of a hearty welcome within the borders of the Dickens Fellowship. And the welcome will have many reasons to commend it. To begin with, the enthusiastic Dickensian is never weary of reading about the subject of his enthusiasm, and Mr. FitzGerald's whole-hearted devotion to Dickens's memory is not only infectious, but stimulating. In the second place, Mr. FitzGerald is now one of the very few survivors of the old Dickens circle, and what he has to say has the authority of a genuine and far-reaching intimacy with the inimitable "Boz." And thirdly, if a third reason be desired, all subscribers to *The Dickensian* will feel a sincere loyalty to Mr. FitzGerald himself as the first President of the Dickens Fellowship and the original founder of the Boz Club—two institutions which, in their different ways, are doing something to keep green the memory of the most potent force in the fiction of the Victorian era. Mr. FitzGerald's two handsome volumes are therefore sure of a large public within the circle of our own readers, and, since most of these readers will be well-equipped to form their own estimate of the value and variety of the contents, we will confine ourselves to a brief suggestion of the nature and extent of the material which Mr. FitzGerald provides.

The book, let it be said at once, is in no sense a formal biography of Charles Dickens. It may very well be that Mr. FitzGerald feels, in common with many careful students of Dickens, that that work has been done once and for all by John Forster in a book of which we may agree with Professor Ward in assuming that "its shortcomings have been more frequently proclaimed than defined." In any case, Mr. FitzGerald makes no attempt to supplant or supersede the authorized biography. He does not even follow the outline of Dickens's life deliberately, but supplements it with a collection of bright, entertaining gossip, drawn from the stores of a fertile and flowering memory, and ranging at will over every side of Dickens's character and interests. The result is a work somewhat unwieldy and indefinite as a desk-book, but full of little intimate touches and quaint pieces of information—a storehouse of Dickensiana that future biographers of Dickens (if more are to arise) will be bound to consult in the course of their literary excavations.

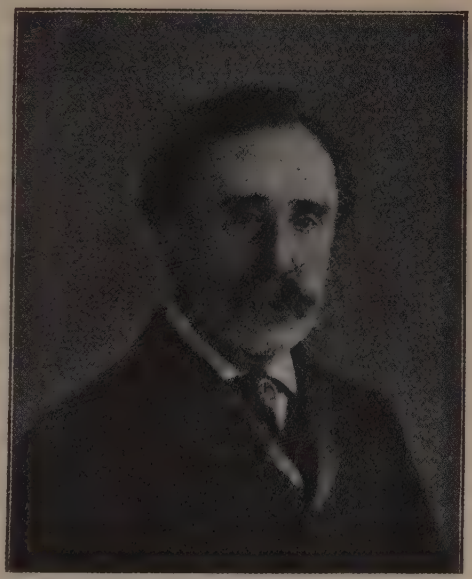
Gossip is, indeed, of the essence of the volumes, but it is gossip of a quality not always associated with that somewhat elastic word. Too often the name of "gossip" is made to cover and excuse a licence for ill-natured personalities, but no such indulgence is granted to Mr. FitzGerald's active and kindly penmanship. There is not a word in his two volumes that can give offence to the keenest and least critical admirer of Dickens's genius. Here and there the variety of Mr. FitzGerald's recollection leads him to recount little anecdotes that seem almost too trivial for a permanent record, but this is the only criticism that can be justly advanced against the even level of his taste and discretion. The book is not without mistakes, and the proofs seem to

* *The Life of Charles Dickens, as Revealed in his Writings*, by Percy FitzGerald, M.A., F.S.A. In two volumes. London: Chatto and Windus.

have needed a more careful revision, for the printers have indulged in an unusually liberal inconsequence in the matter of proper names and punctuations. These things, however, can be set right in a new edition, and will only give serious offence to the critic of the literal and verbal school of dissection.

The book abounds in little pictures of Dickens, very carefully remembered. Here is one that bears the impress of reality upon the face of it:—

"I recall the last gloomy day before he set out in the *Cuba*, a noted Cunarder. There was a sort of general rendezvous at the office, all sorts and sundry stumbling up the little narrow stairs to intrude on him and have a talk. All through the long day there was this tumultuous incoming of eager, fussy people struggling up the dark stair. 'I wish to see Mr. Dickens; give him my name.' These folk generally contrived to force their way in, he good-naturedly receiving them in all his troubles—'So kind of you to come,' etc. What a busy day for him! He was ordering things to the last moment."



MR. PERCY FITZGERALD

And here is a passage of criticism which strikes us as remarkably true, and fresh as well:—

"Dickens's own ebullient personality was exhibited in his writings after a fashion that might escape the observation of the general reader. His correction of an offender was often marked by personal violence and actual chastisement. Some of this must be set to the account of the habits of the time, when a word and a blow were so often in company. No one is 'knocked down' nowadays; then it was the regular answer to an offensive remark. In Dickens's case it was really owing to his generous indignation at the behavour of his own characters."

But the reader must go to Mr. FitzGerald's pages themselves to judge of the many bright and vivid little touches by which he recalls the genial, eager, impetuous "Boz" to the fancy of a new generation. The material is heaped together, with too little method and some occasional incongruity, but it is "good measure, shaken down, and running over," and the more one knows of Dickens the more one appreciates its value as an aid to the general impression of a singularly delightful personality.

CONFERENCE OF BRANCH DELEGATES

THE first annual conference of delegates from the various branches of the Fellowship took place at headquarters, on the afternoon of Saturday, 2 September. The branches represented were Manchester (Mr. Arthur Humphreys), Liverpool (Mrs. Howard Bell), Leeds (Mr. G. F. Furniss), Stockport (Mr. W. Hatfield), York (Mr. G. Medd), Nottingham (Mr. S. Hinton Edwards), Portsmouth (Mr. B. W. Matz), Maidstone (Miss O'Shaugnessy), Southampton (Miss Moody), West London (Mr. A. E. Hurdle), Forest Gate (Mr. T. Webb), Brixton (Mr. R. Allbut), whilst Mr. J. W. T. Ley represented the Parent Fellowship and the Bristol and Clifton Society.

The chair was occupied by Mr. B. W. Matz. The Conference was a great success in every way, and there is no doubt much good will accrue from it. Apart from the fact that it brought together many of those who, working independently in their respective towns, have contributed by their individual efforts greatly to the present power and strength of the Fellowship, it gave an opportunity for the discussion of ways and means for collectively working to still further increase the scope of the work of the Society. Among the many suggestions which it is hoped will in course of time be made to bear fruit, was the one that all branches should make a special effort to celebrate Dickens's birthday on the same day, viz. 7 February. It is intended that the Conference shall be an annual and a movable one, and in all probability next year it will be held in the north of England.

In the evening the Council entertained the delegates to dinner at Carr's Charles Dickens Restaurant, in the Strand, with Mr. Arthur Waugh in the chair, and a most enjoyable and entertaining evening was spent. The menu card and toast list, the work of Mr. J. W. T. Ley, was most ingeniously arranged. On the front was a portrait of Dickens, and every item was prefaced by a most apt quotation from the novelist's works. Every one was appropriate, not the least so being that to the toast of the Fellowship taken from one of Dickens's speeches: "I can only assure you that this Society continues its plain, unobtrusive, useful career. I can only assure you that it does a great deal of good at a very small cost."

During the evening songs by Mr. J. E. Palmer and Mr. F. J. Evans, and recitations by Mr. Frank Speaight, were given, as were also many interesting speeches.

Mr. Arthur Humphreys, in submitting the toast "The Dickens Fellowship," remarked that those who organized the society only three years ago must see much cause for satisfaction in the fact that it had obtained such a world-wide hold upon the English-speaking peoples. He did not exaggerate when he said that the founders of the Fellowship had earned the gratitude of thousands for having started a movement which was of such far-reaching importance. When they considered that in the three years of its existence about eight thousand persons had joined, it must appear to the least observant person that this was an institution which was not a mere passing phase of some literary interest, but an organization which had come to stay. As members of the Fellowship, he thought they might flatter themselves

that they were taking part in a movement which was destined to do a great amount of good in the world.

Mr. B. W. Matz (the first Hon. General Secretary of the Fellowship) responded and gave a brief but interesting account of the origin of the Society. Mr. J. W. T. Ley, Hon. General Secretary, also replied, and spoke of the tremendous growth of the Fellowship during the last year.

Mr. Waugh, the Chairman, proposed "The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens." They talked, he said, of the immortal memory of Charles Dickens. Immortality was a very long word, but long as it was in any field of action, it surely was a particularly long word as they applied it to the literary profession. There was a Latin saying, "the written word remains," but true as that was in one sense, it was even more true in another that there was no field of activity in which reputation changed more quickly, in which the fickleness—almost the ingratitude—of the public was more evident, than the literary profession. All of them with ten, fifteen, or twenty years of professional experience had seen the reputation of novelists suddenly blossom and as suddenly fade, and they who did anything with the pen must feel that when they spoke of immortality they were speaking of a very great thing, and a thing which was given to very, very few. Thirty-five years had now passed since that morning when the whole civilized world was paralysed with the news that Charles Dickens was dead—half the ordinary span of man's life. What did it mean when they said that thirty-five years had passed since that day? It meant that a whole generation had been swept away; it meant that very few of Dickens's contemporaries remained; it meant that there were few in the room that night who remembered that June morning, and fewer, of course, who had seen Dickens or spoken with him face to face. The world which he pictured was passing also. Temple Bar had itself moved out into the country; the Strand had changed its face; of Lady Dedlock's graveyard nothing was left, and he believed that shortly a block of model dwellings was to be erected on its ground. The very manners, the very customs of Dickens's period were passing away. Not only did Mrs. Gamp no longer walk down Kingsgate Street—the street itself was no more, and Mrs. Gamp was dead. The "W's" and "We's" of Sam Weller had passed away. And something more than this. When a great man died he left behind him a great wake of personal influence—all that his strong individuality, life, and letters stood for. But thirty-five years had gone, and Charles Dickens came now to stand upon his reputation, as he said in his will that he most desired to stand—on the reputation of his published works. Thirty-five years had gone by, and what of his immortal memory? He (the speaker) would not say that his memory stood as high as it did when he died. It stood much higher; it stood much higher in the public gaze, far, far higher in the public affection. Charles Dickens to-day was unquestionably the best-loved writer in the English language. If they looked round the whole field of English literature there was only one writer to compare with him when they spoke of personal affection. That one was Charles Lamb; but the affection which was felt for him was perhaps that of only the inner circle of literary people, whereas the affection for Charles Dickens was that of every English-speaking man, woman, and child throughout every country where the imperial speech was spoken.

Take the Dickens Fellowship: it gathered together men of every class, men of every race, men of every shade of political feeling, men of every grade of religious belief—all joined together in one desire to honour him, not only by words, but by deeds. Why should all this be? It surely could not be only because he was a great writer of romance and wielded a trenchant style. After all, Walter Scott was a greater writer of romance, and Thackeray wielded a surer and firmer style than Dickens. Yet for some undefined reason it seemed impossible to think of a Scott or a Thackeray Fellowship. The reason why Charles Dickens was so loved was because, long before he was a novelist, he was a man, and a man of men. The old quotation so hackneyed, and yet so inevitable, "I am a man, and nothing that pertains to a man do I consider foreign to myself"—that was the secret of his life and works. The speaker was not one of those who believed that the memory of the great was served by pretending that they had no faults. Dickens's faults were written in black and white, but they were withal the faults of a human man. They were the faults of a perhaps too keen, too eager temperament, of a nature swift to act and perhaps sometimes too quick to judge. Against these slight defects across the face of the sun they had to place the memory of a pen that never signed a page that registered a lie, that never flattered or fawned—the memory of a mind and heart always full of tolerance, never spoiled by success, always rich in human sympathy, the mind and heart of a man of men. And the creatures, the children of that noble heart were found implanted in his books. "I seem to be sending some part of myself into the shadowy world." In every character he created there was something of his own sympathy, his own humour, many of his own sufferings, and he sent forth these characters, not indeed into the shadowy world, but into the world of light, where they lived immortally for evermore.

Professor Dowden in a fine critical passage selected three figures from Shakespeare's plays as showing, as it were in a sudden flood of light, the breadth and depth of his human sympathy and insight: Falstaff in the tavern, Lear upon the heath, and Perdita among her flowers. This was finely said—Falstaff, the spirit of broad humour; Lear, sounding the depth of pity and terror; and Perdita, queen of the daffodils, bringing beauty and love into the woodlands.

And if he were asked to select three characters from Dickens to place beside these, he should name Mrs. Gamp in Mr. Mould's parlour—full of the clean and natural mirth of Dickens; Fagin in the condemned cell, solving the depths of pity and terror; and Sydney Carton on the scaffold, presenting his lesson of beauty and love. Humour, power, and love—the secret of our laughter and our tears. Humour, power, and love—three great and good gifts:

> But the greatest of the three,
> And the best is love.

Mr. James E. Palmer gave "Our Guests," to which Mr. G. F. Furniss and Mr. W. Hatfield replied. "The Ladies" was proposed by Mr. Robert Allbut in a delightfully felicitous speech. Mr. H. Snowden Ward submitted "The Visitors," which was acknowledged by Mr. W. Teignmouth Shore, whilst "The Chairman," proposed by Mr. Sidney Marriott, brought a most delightful evening to a close.

SOME HON. SECRETARIES OF THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

Mr. W. W. Hoad (Hastings)

Mr. S. H. Edwards (Notts)

Mr. W. Hatfield (Stockport)

Mr. Percy Maggs (Portsmouth)

Mr. R. Allbut (Brixton)

Mr. G. Medd (York)

Mr. C. Andrews (Bristol)

Mr. C. Covell (Brighton)

Mr. J. Jenks (Shrewsbury)

THE HISTORY OF A MYSTERY

A REVIEW OF THE SOLUTIONS TO "EDWIN DROOD"

By GEORGE F. GADD

CHAPTER III

"JOHN JASPER'S SECRET"

THAT Edwin Drood should reappear upon the scene, safe and sound, was an idea quite in keeping with the spirit of burlesque adopted by "Orpheus C. Kerr," and possibly that writer had no other reason for advancing it; but his suggestion of the identity of Datchery with Mr. Grewgious's clerk Bazzard was probably the outcome of conviction, and must take its place in the list of solutions. Many readers of *Edwin Drood* are attracted by the seeming importance attaching to Bazzard, who is said to labour, during off hours, on a tragedy, and who, on one occasion in the story, is markedly "conspicuous by his absence." Possibly these readers have in mind the parallel case of Wemmick (*Great Expectations*), another lawyer's clerk, and certainly a man with two distinct sides to his character; but if so, they underrate the objection that their theory charges Dickens with flagrant repetition.

In suggesting that Jasper has innocently spirited away his nephew whilst under the influence of his favourite narcotic, the author of *The Cloven Foot* is entirely alone, but in the other important suppositions noted above he is corroborated by subsequent writers, including the authors of the work to which we must now refer.

Not long after Mr. Bumstead made his first appearance in English circles, a New York journalist named Henry Morford arrived in London, and, with the assistance of his wife, entered upon the laborious task of preparing an elaborate sequel. Firm in the belief that Dickens had "unwittingly supplied hints for a much closer estimate of the bearings of those portions remaining unwritten than he could possibly have believed while in life," this ambitious pair pursued energetic inquiries into the details of the book itself, and amongst newspaper or other published announcements, adding variety to their work by frequent excursions to Staple Inn, Rochester, Cobham, or other localities likely to yield information concerning the story. The result of this labour appeared simultaneously in *Frank Leslie's Newspaper* in America, and in *The Chimney Corner*, a weekly periodical, in England, but a subsequent publication in eight monthly parts, at one shilling each, more closely approached to the conditions under which the original novel was issued. These parts, appearing from October, 1871, to May of the following year, were sold in green pictorial wrappers, uniform in size with *Edwin Drood*, with eighteen woodcuts, twelve of which were reproduced in miniature on the cover.

Meanwhile the complete work, entitled *John Jasper's Secret: a Sequel to Charles Dickens's Unfinished Novel "The Mystery of Edwin Drood,"* appeared in the form of a volume (Peterson and Bros., Philadelphia), and, presumably, met with a degree of success, for an English reprint followed in 1872. This latter contained two extra drawings, and was described as "a narrative of certain events following and explaining" the mystery. Copies of these early examples have become so rare

that they have been advertised at eight or nine times their published price; but a much more recent edition, issued by Fenno and Company, East Sixteenth Street, New York, in 1901, somewhat discounts that valuation, notwithstanding the fact that the whole of the illustrations are omitted.

The work was originally anonymous, but later a singularly audacious statement of authorship was allowed to creep in and still remains. The names of Charles Dickens the younger and Wilkie Collins, jointly associated with this book, recall the rumours to which Messrs. Chapman and Hall opposed their announcement, and one wonders how far those rumours are responsible for an absurd claim which scarcely needs the emphatic contradiction to be obtained from a letter written by Wilkie Collins in December, 1878. "I was asked to finish the story, and positively refused."

So many inquiries concerning *John Jasper's Secret* have been made, at various times, through the pages of *Notes and Queries* and elsewhere, that the foregoing lengthy explanation may be deemed excusable, although, perhaps, disproportionate to the merits of the subject. For information concerning the actual authorship and certain other details, acknowledgment is due to Mr. H. Snowden Ward, who adds, in his published statement, that future editions of the book will bear the names of the true authors.

Like all continuations in the fictional form, this literary effort must, of course, meet with a certain amount of disapproval on principle. Attempts here and there to imitate the style of Dickens are, as might be expected, not a success. Neither do the actors in the story retain the characteristics with which we have learned to associate them: they employ their own, or similar, phrases, but that is a very different thing. Nevertheless, as an attempt to grapple with a complex problem the book is not without interest, and, if some of the threads left by the original author are incorrectly manipulated, few are entirely neglected. The salient features of the solution may be briefly noted as follows: During one of the "strange expeditions," when Jasper finds himself at liberty to wander over the cathedral, he makes the discovery that the edifice is doubly walled, a space, only partially filled in, being left between the two erections. Into this safe hiding-place, through a hole made by him in the roofing, he casts his nephew, thinking he has strangled him effectually. The betrothal ring he discovers and carries away, using it long afterwards in a further attempt to incriminate Landless.

Drood, rescued by Durdles, discloses the crime to Bazzard, who thereupon assumes the character of Datchery. Edwin, on his recovery, returns, also disguised, and is present at an interview when Jasper is startled by the production of an article supposed by him to be buried with the body. Later, the murderous scarf is "found," and Jasper, feeling insecure, revisits the scene of his crime. He is about to descend into the pit in search of the body, when the boy Deputy, attracted by an unusual light in the cathedral, yelps out his war-cry, and sends a stone crashing through a window, entirely destroying the remnant of Jasper's nerves. To complete the punishment, the wretched man is inveigled into the crypt by Durdles and confronted with

Edwin Drood. Helena Landless, Grewgious, and Tartar pursue an independent course. Dressed as a boy, the sister of Neville invades the opium den, and supplies Jasper with a potent "mixture," which causes him to babble his secret. A second dose, administered by the Opium Woman, who has recognized an old enemy, proves too powerful, and Jasper ends where the original story found him. Landless joins the Church, Rosa accepts Tartar, and Helena gives her hand to Edwin Drood.

CHAPTER IV

A SPIRIT SOLUTION

THE uninitiated reader may be readily excused if he assumes that the present subject is largely dependent upon conjecture, but it now becomes our duty to disclose a sequel or conclusion which is far from acknowledging any such uncertain basis. The birthplace of this unique production is the village of Brattleborough, Vermont, United States of America; the date is 1873, and the alleged author is—Charles Dickens! Not the younger Charles this time, but the originator of the mystery.

We will not stay to inquire why Brattleborough, so far away from Gadshill, has been selected for so much honour; nor will we seek to know why the world has deliberately preferred the darkness of ignorance to this astounding flood of light. It were better to proceed at once with our examination, and, perhaps, these reasons may appear unsought.

The Mystery of Edwin Drood Complete is a motley production of nearly five hundred pages, containing two titles, two prefaces, and a great mass of amazing inanity cheek by jowl with the old familiar text. It is stated that "Part the Second" is "By the Spirit Pen of Charles Dickens, through a Medium," and the further information is afforded that the next work, to appear through the same channel of communication, shall be entitled *The Life and Adventures of Bockley Wickleheep.**

The peculiar setting of the dedication to "The Honest Poor" is, presumably, responsible for that inscription being reminiscent of Sapsea's epitaph; but, whether or no, the reader will view it leniently, for there is little enough in the second part of the book which, in any degree, serves to recall the genius of the first. Not a few of the original characters are altogether abandoned, without regard to any possible purpose for which they were created, and new puppets are introduced in a spirit of irresponsible prodigality, tending to burden the final chapters with a crowd of ticketed marionettes. But those faults are as nothing in presence of the awful grammatical vagaries, the inexplicable blunders in relation to locality or situation, the entire disregard of early device, suggestion, and definite statement, confounding the artistic sense at every turn of the leaf. These, indeed, make us thankful that the spirit of Dickens abroad amongst the numerous branches of the Fellowship owns no kinship to the ghostly author of this precious continuation.

* A published foretaste of the spirit solution appears to have given this name as "Nickleheep." Until the promised novel appears, there will probably remain a doubt on the point.

Certainly it is not extremely distressing to learn that "Grewgious is *most* always at home," or that he "*loaned* the portrait to Tartar," or that Rosa wondered if Drood "*had changed any*" during his long absence. The position of Brattleborough on the map prepares us, in some measure, for such-like attacks. But when we are told that "bidding each other good-night, the reverend gentleman wended his way homeward," or that "a quarrel takes place between *he* and young Landless," our sorrow is more than that of parting, on the one hand, or of sympathetic agitation on the other.

The Dickensian who has learned to associate the Gate House in Rochester with Jasper's lodging will note, with some surprise, that Mr. Crisparkle, standing in the road, could peer through the window into the choirmaster's room; and the same reader will probably be a little puzzled at the reference to a "cross street leading directly" out of the High Street "to the river," for he will conclude, with some reason, that the most direct cut to the river is by way of the High Street itself. But these details, however interesting, must give way to a brief inquiry into the nature of the solution. The explosion of the Datchery mystery is perfectly in accord with the remainder of the explanation. That eccentric individual is not Mr. Bazzard, the lawyer's clerk; he is not Grewgious himself; he is not one of the other prominent characters of the "earth-life" fragment; he is not even the "Flying Waiter" of the Grewgious dinner, although, as an ingenious wit has suggested, this lowly character has a claim to consideration by reason of the fog described as hanging about him. Datchery, in point of fact, proves a total disappointment, in that his actual personality is less familiar to us than his assumption. As the Opium Woman's son, with no apparent reason for *watching* Jasper, and with a definite grievance quite distinct from that of Drood, he leaves his early actions in Cloisterham more of a mystery than ever. Moreover, it seems a paltry excuse for a risky disguise that it is assumed in order to be "on the safe side," there being little probability that the wearer would be recognized, in any case.

As to the rescued Edwin, a stained face and cropped hair suffice to meet his modest ideas of concealment, though he certainly deems it expedient to envelop himself in boguey white when appearing to his uncle in the crypt.

Jasper lends material assistance to the designs of his enemy by rather carelessly dropping the betrothal ring at the opium den; and on a later occasion, after another storm has broken open the Sapsea vault, he further expedites matters by a most injudicious line of action. Altogether he is in danger of forfeiting the reader's respect for his artistic criminality when he saves the situation by qualifying for a madhouse and so escaping the prison. Helena and Crisparkle, Rosa and Drood, pair off. To complete Edwin's joy, Princess Puffer and her long-lost son take up their abode with him. Grewgious, too, is invited, but fortunately declines.

The discovery, on a snowy Christmas morning, of Jasper's dead body, brings this extraordinary sequel to a dramatic conclusion.

(*To be continued.*)

CALENDAR OF DICKENS QUOTATIONS

COMPILED BY "OLD FLEET"

Oct. 1.—"There is one quality which all men have in common with the angels, the blessed opportunity of exercising if they will—mercy."—*Nicholas Nickleby*—Mr. Charles Cheeryble.

Oct. 2.—"Though their merriment was rather boisterous, still it came from the heart, and not from the lips, and this is the right sort of merriment, after all."—*Pickwick Papers.*

Oct. 3.—"There is, perhaps, no profession, however useful; no pursuit, however meritorious; which can escape the petty attacks of vulgar minds."—*Sketches by Boz.*

Oct. 4.—"The busy people achieve their full share of mischief in the world, you may rely upon it. What have the people been about who have been the busiest in getting money and in getting power this century or two? No mischief?"—*David Copperfield*—Mr. Wickfield.

Oct. 5.—"Oh! ye Pharisees . . . who soundingly appeal to human nature, see first that it be human. Take heed it has not been transformed during the slumber and the sleep of generations into the nature of the beast."—*Martin Chuzzlewit.*

Oct. 6.—"Oh, the nerves, the nerves, the mysteries of this machine called Man. Oh, the little that unhinges it! Poor creatures that we are!"—*The Chimes*—Alderman Cute.

Oct. 7.—"It is a melancholy truth that even great men have their poor relations."—*Bleak House.*

Oct. 8.—"Without strong affection and humanity of heart, and gratitude to that Being whose code is Mercy, and whose great attribute is benevolence to all things that breathe, happiness can never be attained."—*Oliver Twist.*

Oct. 9.—"Long may it remain in this mixed world a point not easy of decision which is the more beautiful example of the Almighty's goodness—the delicate fingers that are formed for sensitiveness and sympathy of touch, and made to minister to pain and grief, or the rough hard hand that the heart touches, guides, and softens in a moment."—*Dombey and Son.*

Oct. 10.—"Gratitude and devotion are Christian qualities."—*Pictures from Italy.*

Oct. 11.—"There's good in all of us—if we only knew where it was in some of us."—*Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy*—Mrs. Lirriper.

Oct. 12.—"There are dark shadows on this earth, but its lights are stronger in the contrast."—*Pickwick Papers.*

Oct. 13.—"There is disinterestedness in the world. . . . We are not all arrayed in two opposite ranks, the *offensive* and *defensive*. Some few there are who can walk between; who help the needy as they go; and take no part with the other side."—*Martin Chuzzlewit*—Mr. Pecksniff.

Oct. 14.—"It is difficult to smile with an aching heart."—*Pickwick Papers*—Serjeant Buzfuz.

Oct. 15.—"Many a gentleman lives well upon a soft head, who would find a heart of the same quality a very great drawback."—*Barnaby Rudge*—Stagg.

Oct. 16.—"Love must suffer in this stern world. It ever had been so, and it ever would be so."—*David Copperfield*—Julia Mills.

Oct. 17.—"Our judgments are so liable to be influenced by many considerations, which, almost without our knowing it, are unfair, that it is necessary to keep a guard upon them."—*Little Dorrit*—Arthur Clennam.

Oct. 18.—"It is always the person not in the predicament who knows what ought to have been done in it, and would unquestionably have done it too."—*A Christmas Carol.*

Oct. 19.—"Practical jokes are very capital in their way, if you can only get the other party to see the fun of them."—*Sketches by Boz.*

Oct. 20.—"Young ladies will look forward to being married, and will jostle each other in the race to the altar, and will avail themselves of all opportunities of displaying their own attractions to the best advantage, down to the very end of time as they have done from the beginning."—*Nicholas Nickleby.*

Oct. 21.—"The absence of the soul is far more terrible in a living man than in a dead one."—*Barnaby Rudge.*

Oct. 22.—"The law is a ass—a idiot."—*Oliver Twist*—Mr. Bumble.

Oct. 23.—"Let us take heed how we laugh without reason lest we cry with it."—*Martin Chuzzlewit*—Mr. Pecksniff.

Oct. 24.—"No man ever loved a woman, lost her, and knew her, with a blameless though unchanged mind, when she was a wife and mother; but her children had a strange sympathy with him—an instinctive, delicate pity for him."—*A Tale of Two Cities.*

Oct. 25.—"I like to see the humbler classes of society careful of their dress and appearance, and even, if they please, decorated with such little trinkets as come within the compass of their means. Supposing it confined within reasonable limits, I would always encourage this kind of pride, as a worthy element of self-respect, in any person I employed; and should no more be deterred from doing so, because some wretched female referred her fall to a love of dress, than I would allow my construction of the real intent and meaning of the Sabbath to be influenced by any warning to the well-disposed, founded on his backslidings on that particular day, which might emanate from the rather doubtful authority of a murderer in Newgate."—*American Notes.*

Oct. 26.—"There's no royal road to learning, and what is life but learning?"—*Our Mutual Friend*—John Harmon.

Oct. 27.—"There are very few moments in a man's existence when he experiences so much ludicrous distress, or meets with so little charitable commiseration, as when he is in pursuit of his own hat."—*Pickwick Papers.*

Oct. 28.—"She was truest to them in the season of trial, as all the quietly loyal and good will always be."—*A Tale of Two Cities.*

Oct. 29.—"The windows of the house of Memory, and the windows of the house of Mercy, are not so easily closed as windows of glass and wood. They fly open unexpectedly; they rattle in the night."—*Somebody's Luggage.*

Oct. 30.—"It is the invariable practice of many mighty philosophers, in carrying out their theories, to evince great wisdom and foresight in providing against every possible contingency which can be supposed at all likely to affect themselves."—*Oliver Twist.*

Oct. 31.—"It's a world full of hearts, and a serious world, with all its follies; and it is a world on which the sun never rises, but it looks upon a thousand bloodless battles that are some set-off against the miseries and wickedness of battle-fields; and it is a world we need be careful how we libel, Heaven forgive us, for it is a world of sacred mysteries, and its Creator only knows what lies beneath the surface of His lightest image."—*The Battle of Life*—Dr. Jeddler.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

Oct. 5. Basingstoke: Recital of *Nicholas Nickleby*, in eight chapters, by Mr. Frank Speaight, at Town Hall.

,, 6. Manchester Branch: Recital of *The Chimes* by Mr. John Harwood, at Memorial Hall, at eight.

,, 9. Brixton Branch: Opening Night of season.

,, 11. Annual General Meeting of Dickens Fellowship at Memorial Hall, London, at 7.30.

,, 13. West London Branch: Annual General Meeting, followed by Readings, at Municipal Buildings, Ealing.

,, 16. Southampton Branch: First meeting of season.

,, 25. Needlework and Charitable Guild Meeting at St. Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, E.C., at seven.

,, 27. Manchester: Recital of *Pickwick Papers*, in six chapters, by Mr. Frank Speaight, at Athenæum.

,, 28. Brighton Branch: Recital of *David Copperfield*, in six chapters, by Mr. Frank Speaight, at Steine Hall.

,, 31. Hornsey: Recital of *Nicholas Nickleby*, by Mr. Frank Speaight, at Ferme Park Baptist Church.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS

The Life of Charles Dickens, as Revealed in his Writings. By Percy FitzGerald. Two vols. 21s. net. London: Chatto and Windus.

Child Characters from Dickens. Retold by L. L. Weedon. With Six Coloured Plates and Seventy Half-tone Illustrations by Arthur A. Dixon. London: Ernest Nister. 7s. 6d.

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

Dickens and Broadstairs: a Memorial Tablet at "Bleak House." Illustrated. *Daily Graphic*, 29 August; *Lady's Pictorial*, 2 September; *Black and White*, 2 September.

Mystery of Edwin Drood: Letters from H. H. F. *Academy*, 26 August. J. Cuming Walters and Andrew Lang, 9 September.

Living People in Famous Novels. *Royal Magazine*, September.

A Living Memorial to Charles Dickens (Dickens Fellowship). By James O'Donnell Bennett. *Chicago Record Herald*, 6 July.

Dickens and Chigwell: a Famous Inn. Illustrated. *Daily Graphic*, 9 September.

Charles Dickens and "Toby, M.P." (Mysteries of Coincidence). *Daily Graphic*, 9 and 13 September.

Dickens as Melodramatist. By Cecil Chesterton. *Saturday Review*, 9 September.

In the Steps of Little Nell. By C. S. S. Illustrated. *Sphere*, 9 September.

David Copperfield's Birthplace. *Sheffield Telegraph*, 5 September.

Half an Hour in a Library (*David Copperfield*). By F. J. H. *Umpire*, 3 September.

Bazzard and Helena: Letter by H. H. F. *Academy*, 9 September.

Where David Copperfield was Born: a Visit to Blundeston. By B. W. Matz. *Daily Chronicle*, 9 September.

A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree. Letter from B. W. Matz. *Athenæum*, 16 September.

Dickens Memories: With Some Reflections on the Edwin Drood Mystery. By Percy Fitzgerald. *Daily Chronicle*, 20 September.

The Mystery of Edwin Drood: More opinions regarding the identity of Datchett. By Dr. Blake Odgers, J. Cuming Walters, Willoughby Matchett and A. Bawtree. *Daily Chronicle*, 23 September.

PICTORIAL POST CARDS

Dickens Characters. Two packets of six cards each, Nos. 145 and 146. Universal Pictorial Post Card Company.

Reproductions of original wrappers to Dickens's works. Thirteen cards in packet. 1s. net. London: Chapman and Hall.

DURBAN PICKWICK CLUB.

On Wednesday, 2 August, in the Government Art Schoolroom, the annual business meeting of the Durban Pickwick Club was held. The election of officers and the annual report, with various preliminaries, were the programme. Mr. W. Osborne, J.P., was elected President, and Mr. W. E. Turnbull Vice-President. Mr. J. Sinclair was re-elected Treasurer, Mr. T. H. Green Auditor, Mr. Atkinson Secretary, and Mr. Martin Librarian and Assistant Secretary. A strong Committee of eight members was chosen, and an excellent syllabus for the ensuing year was submitted.

The Secretary read the annual report, which showed what excellent work the club had done, and how successful had been the various meetings and entertainments

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

NOTICE TO SECRETARIES OF BRANCHES—*The Editor would feel obliged if Secretaries would send him list of meetings for the season for inclusion in the Diary as early as possible, and in sending reports of meetings he would be glad if they could be kept as brief as possible.*

THE DICKENS DRAMATIC CLUB

THE above club was formed at a meeting held at St. Bride's Institute, E.C., on 4 September, and the officers duly appointed. Mr. W. Teignmouth Shore has kindly consented to be stage manager jointly with Mr. James Chapman—whose long connexion with the Cripplegate Institute is well known—and with the support of the members of the Fellowship the success of the club is assured.

On all hands the formation of the club has been very favourably received. Mr. Arthur Bouchier, Mr. W. L. Courtney, Mr. John Hare, Mr. Seymour Hicks, and Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree have already expressed the keenest interest in it, and in the next number of *The Dickensian* we hope to give a complete list of presidents and vice-presidents.

But it remains with the general members of the Fellowship to make the club a thorough success, and every London member should make a point of becoming a member of the Dramatic Club. The annual subscription is very small, only 5s. For this acting members will receive tickets during the season to the value of 3s., and non-acting members tickets to the full value of their subscriptions. The expense of producing a Dickens play is very great, and we shall require at the very least two or three hundred members if in any way a successful issue is to be obtained. All subscriptions should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Walter Dexter, 40, Ommaney Road, New Cross, S.E.

CONCERT AT STEPNEY AND BROMLEY SICK ASYLUM

ON 14 September the Fellowship provided an evening's entertainment at the Stepney and Bromley Sick Asylum at Blackwall for the folk in residence there. The programme was arranged by Mr. W. Miller, and comprised vocal and instrumental music. The old ladies, many of whom were over eighty years of age, enjoyed themselves immensely, and laughed heartily at the humorous items provided by the company brought by Mr. Sydney Rist. Mr. Joyce, with his daughters and friends, composed a band, and rendered some delightful pieces. The Council of Fellowship was represented by Miss Miniken, Mr. Sidney Marriott, and Mr. W. Miller. The Rev. Morris Roberts, Chaplain of the Institution, presided. The whole performance was greatly enjoyed by all present.

NEEDLEWORK AND CHARITABLE GUILD

NOW that the winter session is drawing near, it is hoped that members will do their utmost to help substantially in the annual sale of work. The date is not yet fixed, but will be announced in good time for the end of November, and in the meanwhile all may be preparing. Funds are very low, but a great deal of work has been done during the past year, and it is hoped to do more in the coming one. Plain and fancy articles of every description will be gratefully received, and should be forwarded to the Hon. Secretary of the Guild at St. Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, E.C., after the date is announced.

BLACKHEATH, LEE, AND LEWISHAM BRANCH

IN aid of their benevolent funds, this branch held a garden party, concert, and sale of work at Sangley Lodge, Catford, 17 September. The Mayoress opened the sale at four, and was welcomed by Mrs. E. J. Hall, the secretary

of the ladies' needlework party, and a vote of thanks was accorded to her, on the proposition of Mrs. Palmer, seconded by Mrs. Curd. Five well-laden stalls displayed attractive wares, with happy results.

The stall-holders were: Needlework and fancy articles, Mesdames Hall, Palmer, Thomas, Herne, and Miss Thomas; flowers, Mesdames Inglis, Lewis, and the Misses Lewis; periodicals and post cards, the Misses Palmer and Pett: refreshments, Mesdames Curd, Hubble, and Pett; needlework exhibits, Mrs. Goldstone. During the afternoon musical selections were rendered by the Misses Pett, Mace, and Trevor. At seven o'clock an enjoyable vocal and instrumental concert was given, under the direction of Mr. Clement Foster, and the evening wound up with dancing.

BRIXTON BRANCH

THE annual meeting was held in the Ladies' Parlour of Brixton Independent Church on 18 September, Mr. J. Skeen in the chair. The Treasurer reported the financial position of the branch as satisfactory. The report, given in detail, was unanimously adopted. A letter was received from Mr. P. A. Jones, resigning the office of President, in consequence of his many engagements for the coming winter. His resignation was accepted with regret, and the Secretary was desired to acknowledge the same with an expression of cordial thanks for past services. The Committee recommended the nomination of Mr. W. Davenport, and on the proposition of Mr. R. Allbut, seconded by Mrs. A. Stuart, that gentleman was elected as President for the session 1905–6. The present Committee, with the addition of Mr. Howard Rose, were reappointed. Mr. S. R. Marriott and Mr. R. Allbut were re-elected Treasurer and Secretary respectively. A notice from Mrs. Stuart was read in connexion with "The Little Dorrit" Society, announcing the next ladies' working meeting, which will be held at Mrs. E. H. Jones's, 1, Tierney Road, Streatham, 4 October.

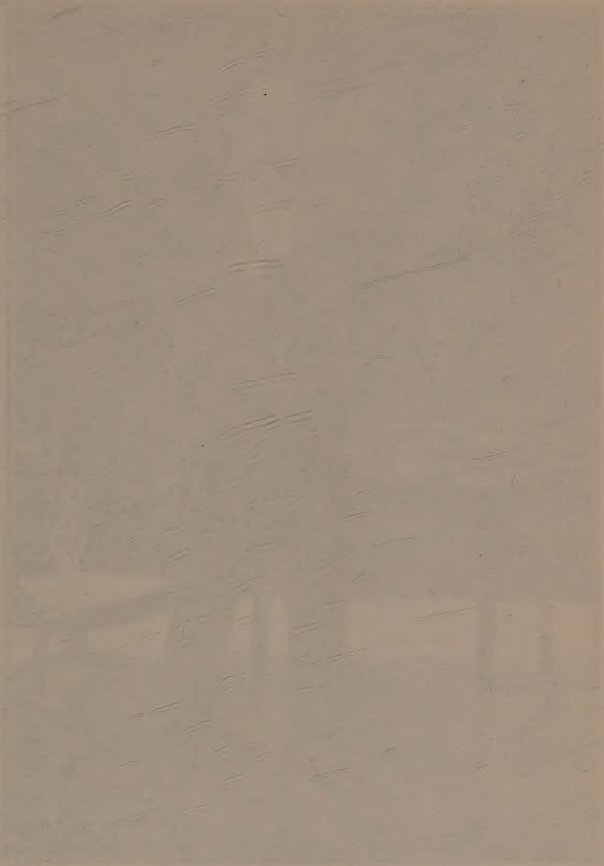
BRISTOL AND CLIFTON DICKENS SOCIETY

THE first general business meeting of the 1905–6 session was held on 5 September, in the C.M.S. Hall, Park Street. The Rev. A. N. Blatchford, in presiding, said the society were enabled to congratulate themselves on the work of the past session, and he looked forward to getting into blue water as far as their adventures next year were concerned. He had no doubt that the society had a long course of success in front of them.

The Secretary and Treasurer (Mr. C. Andrews) then presented his report, which, compared with former years, was decidedly satisfactory. They had taken steps that were new to the society during the past year, notably the holding of a dinner on the birthday of Charles Dickens. This had proved a great success, and he hoped the event would become an annual one. A letter was read from Miss Vachell, of the Guild of Poor Things, in which she thanked the society for the gift of sixteen guineas as a result of the "Trial Scene from Pickwick," which was presented at the Colston Hall last session.

BENALLA (AUSTRALIA) BRANCH.

EVERY success seems to be attending the above branch, and the enthusiasm of its members culminated in a Dickens Costume Ball in July last, which proved to be the most delightful function ever held in Benalla, according to the Australian paper to hand. The company was a brilliant one, and the characters represented were numerous. During the evening a procession took place headed by Mrs. Jarley, amongst which was that mythical person, Mrs. Harris. We congratulate Benalla on having discovered her. Sairey Gamp, we understand, was absent; a fortunate thing, no doubt, for the happiness of the meeting, under the circumstances.



CHARLES DICKENS
From a photograph *circa* 1866